



# MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF THE ENVIRONMENT

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Martin O'Malley  
Governor

Robert M. Summers, Ph.D.  
Secretary

Anthony G. Brown  
Lieutenant Governor

February 18, 2014

The Honorable Thomas M. Middleton  
Members of the Finance Committee  
3 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re: Letter of Support: Senate Bill 521 – Agriculture – Poultry Litter – Energy-Generating Cooperative Program**

Dear Senator Middleton and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of the Environment has reviewed Senate Bill 521 and would like to express its support for this legislation.

Senate Bill 521 would further Maryland's efforts to achieve reductions of nutrient loads discharged to the waters of the Chesapeake Bay required under EPA's Chesapeake Bay TMDL. In particular, SB521 should lead to reductions of phosphorous loads caused by runoff of fertilizer from agricultural lands.

The management of the significant loads of poultry litter generated in Maryland annually is an ongoing challenge. Additionally, agricultural statistics report increases in poultry population which results in an increase in manure, only adding to the management challenge.

The establishment under SB 521 of an energy-generating cooperative program would promote the utilization of poultry litter as an energy source and thereby, through burning and anaerobic decomposition, reduce the vast quantities of phosphorus-rich manure that must be applied to crops as fertilizer, maintained in storage facilities, or transported, all of which activities can potentially contribute to the excessive nutrient loads that are degrading water quality and impacting aquatic life and resources in the Chesapeake Bay.

Thank you for your consideration of this information as you review SB 521. Please contact me at 410-260-6301 or by email at [jeffery.fretwell@maryland.gov](mailto:jeffery.fretwell@maryland.gov) if you would like to discuss this issue further.

Sincerely,

Jeffery Fretwell

Cc: George (Tad) S. Aburn, Jr., Director, Air and Radiation Management Administration

